



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL  
Office of the Speaker

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## Navajo Nation Council meets with United States Small Business Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** February 22, 2022



**PHOTO:** Speaker Seth Damon welcomes U.S. Small Business Administrator, Isabella Casillas Guzman to the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, Ariz.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Earlier today, Speaker Seth Damon and the 24th Navajo Nation Council hosted a roundtable meeting with United States Small Business Administrator, Isabella Casillas Guzman, Assistant Administrator for Native American Affairs, Jackson S. Brossy, and representatives from the Dineh Chamber of Commerce.

Speaker Damon officially welcomed Administrator Guzman and provided an official tour of the Navajo Nation Council Chambers in Window Rock, Ariz. Meeting topics included support for small businesses during the pandemic, prioritizing Navajo infrastructure development initiatives, and funding for tribal projects from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed into law by President Joe Biden in November.

“The Navajo economy thrives when our local small businesses and tribal enterprises are successful, especially during this pandemic. Many Navajo entrepreneurs and business owners were directly impacted and some closed or moved off the Navajo Nation because of COVID-19. It is imperative we work with state and federal agencies to uplift our infrastructure projects that will immediately create jobs and support small businesses with the construction of new water, broadland, and electric power lines,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

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Isabella Casillas Guzman serves as the 27th Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and was sworn into office in March 2021. The federal agency represents more than 32.5 million small businesses across the country and is committed to assisting local business owners and entrepreneurs grow sustainably.

Speaker Damon added, “Many Native American business owners utilize their 401K pension savings as a loan to start a small business because this is a way to access capital. In many cases, there are no other ways for the Navajo people to get a loan from a bank. We need to revamp our small business loan program, create new tax laws to encourage local economic growth, and create more jobs. The Navajo Nation has the water and the foundation for companies to build here. We welcome you Administrator Guzman to the largest Sovereign Nation in the United States and please know we are open for business.”

The Office of Native American Affairs at the SBA is led by Assistant Administrator, Jackson S. Brossy, who provides executive oversight, management, leadership, and supports Native American entrepreneurs.

Additional resources for Native-owned businesses can be found at <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-locations/headquarters-offices/office-native-american-affairs/office-native-american-affairs-resources>

Established in 2013, the Dineh Chamber of Commerce advocates and assists Navajo-owned businesses and organizations by collaborating and partnering with businesses, organizations, and governments that promote economic development and diversity in commerce across the Navajo Nation. More information can be accessed here <https://www.dinehchamber.org/>

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